

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1750

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: CH US TW

SUBJ: REFERENCE NEWS ARTICLE ON SINO-US RELATIONS

REF: HONG KONG 9608

1. SUMMARY: USLO HAS OBTAINED TWO JULY COPIES OF THE RESTRICTED REFERENCE NEWS, ONE OF WHICH CONTAINS EXCERPTS OF AN ARTICLE FROM A JAPANESE PAPER ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR SINO-US NORMAIZATION. THE ARTICLE IS VERY UPBEAT AND CITES A BROAD RANGE OF US SOURCES TO PROVE THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS SERIOUS ABOUT NORMALIZATION AND INTENDS TO FIND A SOLUTION DURING SECRETARY VANCE'S AUGUST 22-26 VISIT TO THE PRC. WE ARE STRUCK BY THE WILLINGNESS OF PRC MEDIA OFFICIALS TO REPLAY SUCH AN OPTIMISTIC ARTICLE FOR INTERNAL USE AND THE AMOUNT OF DETAIL, INCLUDING US PROPOSALS FOR CONTINUING TAIWAN ACCESS TO US ARMS AFTER NORMALIZATION.

2. USLO HAS JUST OBTAINED THE JULY 17 AND JULY 27

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ISSUES OF THE LIMITED CIRCULATION REFERENCE NEWS (TS'AN-K'AO HSIAO-HSI; CIRCULATION: 9 MILLION), THE DIGEST OF SELECTED FOREIGN NEWS ARTICLES (COPIES POUCHED TO HONG KONG AND WASHINGTON). THE JULY 27 ISSUE (PAGE 4) IS NOTEWORTHY FOR EXCERPTS FROM A JULY 16 SANKEIWHIMBUN ARTICLE BY ITS WASHINGTON REPORTER. THE ARTICLE IS ENTITLED QUOTE IS THE

NORMALIZATION OF SINO-US RELATIONS ABOUT TO BE COMPLETED?* THE CARTER GOVERNMENT HAS STARTED TO CAST OFF CONCERN ABOUT TAIWAN; JAPAN COULD AGAIN EXPERIENCE NIXON'S 'SHOCKU' END QUOTE. THE ARTICLE NOTES THAT JUST WHEN JAPAN IS CONCERNED ABOUT US TROOP WITHDRAWALS FROM SOUTH KOREA, A TREND FOR ESTABLISHING FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PRC IS DEVELOPING IN WASHINGTON. THIS HAS OCCURRED AS A RESULT OF THE PREPARATIONS FOR SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT AND THE ARTICLE STATES "THE POINT WORTH NOTING IS THAT IT EVEN APPEARS THAT RECENTLY PRESIDENT CARTER IS NO SO SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE BREAKING OF RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN."

3. THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO QUOTE OTHER CARTER ADMINISTRATION STATEMENTS, CONCLUDING THAT THERE IS A DEFINITE CHANGE IN US THINKING ABOUT NORMALIZATION. CITING SECRETARY VANCE'S JUNE 29 SPEECH ON US POLICY TOWARD ASIA, THE AUTHOR NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY EMPHASIZED THE GOAL OF "COMPLETE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS" AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE US RECOGNIZES THERE IS ONLY ONE CHINA. SUCH STATEMENTS, THE AUTHOR ARGUED, ARE A CLUE TO US GOVERNMENT THINKING AND MADE THE AUTHORITIES ON TAIWAN "VERY MAD." THE ARTICLE ALSO:

-- NOTED A JULY 7 BOSTON GLOBE REPORT THAT
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PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ALREADY DECIDED TO BREAK RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN AND THE WHITE HOUSE REACTION THAT NO DECISION HAD YET BEEN MADE;

-- REPORTED PRESIDENT CARTER'S COMMENTS DURING A MID-JULY MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR WOODCOCK THAT THE US EMPHASIZES THE COMPLETION OF NORMALIZATION AS THE MOST IMPORTANT BASIS OF THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE;

-- STATED THAT US GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES HAVE SAID THE WHOLE QUESTION OF RELATIONS WILL BE DECIDED FOR THE VANCE VISIT.

4. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES BY NOTING THAT AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF ALL OPTIONS BY THE US GOVERNMENT, THERE WILL BE ONLY ONE VIEW FOR THE REALIZATION OF FULL RELATIONS: REDUCE US RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN TO TRADE, TOURISM, ETC., AND CANCEL THE US-TAIWAN MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY. HOWEVER, THE ARTICLE CONTINUED, THE US STILL HOPES FOR A PRC PROMISE FOR THE PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE TAIWAN PROBLEM. THE PRC CONSIDERS THIS AN INTERNAL AFFAIR AND SUCH A PROMISE IS IMPOSSIBLE. THE ARTICLE THEN CITES A BOSTON GLOBE REPORTER THAT US OFFICIALS WILL THEREFORE ASK CHINA "TO OPEN ONE

EYE AND CLOSE THE OTHER" TOWARD CONTINUED US ARMS ACCESS FOR TAIWAN. IN ANY CASE, IT CAN BE AFFIRMED THAT SECRETARY VANCE'S VISIT WILL BE THE CLIMAX OF THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS. A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS THAT "IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT OBSTACLES EXIST, IT JUST CLIMBS OVER THEM."

5. COMMENT: EVEN THOUGH WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING IF THE EDITORS OF REFERENCE NEWS ARE GIVING THEIR READERS CONTINUING COVERAGE OF FOREIGN ANALYSIS OF SECRETARY VANCE'S UPCOMING VISIT, WE ARE STRUCK BY THE AMOUNT OF DETAIL AND THE UPBEAT NATURE OF THIS LATE JULY ARTICLE. MORE RECENTLY, HOWEVER, THE HONG KONG PRO-PRC PRESS HAS BEEN LESS OPTIMISTIC SUGGESTING CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT OFFICIAL PRC MEDIA GUIDANCE MIGHT HAVE SUDDENLY CHANGED TO REFLECT AN OFFICIAL REASSESSMENT OF THE CHANCES FOR FULL NORMALIZATION DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT (REFTEL).

6. EVEN IN THE JULY 27 ISSUE OF REFERENCE NEWS, THERE WAS AN APPARENT ATTEMPT TO COUNTER THE OPTIMISM OF THE SANKEI SHIMBUN ARTICLE. ON THE SAME PAGE IS A JULY 17 DETROIT NEWS ARTICLE ENTITLED "PATIENCE: SOME ADVICE FOR WOODCOCK." THE ARTICLE ADVISES THAT THE WHITE HOUSE DIRECTIVES TO THE NEW ENVOY OUGHT TO BE "VISIT THE GREAT WALL, APPRECIATE THE SUBURBS, STUDY PATIENCE, MAINTAIN RESERVE." WHILE HUMOROUS THE ARTICLE LEFT THE READER WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT MANY FOREIGNERS ARE NOT CONVINCED THAT REAL PROGRESS WILL OCCUR.

7. BALANCE OF ARTICLES IN THE TWO ISSUES INCLUDE WIRE SERVICE REPORTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, FOREIGN PRESS COMMENTARY ON CHAIRMAN MAO'S "THREE WORLD" THESIS, REPORTS OF DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S MEETING WITH INDIAN CABINET OFFICIALS, FOREIGN PRESS ANALYSIS OF TENG'S REHABILITATION (INCLUDING EXCERPTS FROM AN AUGUST 1 NEWSWEEK ARTICLE), AND A COLLECTION OF VARIOUS ANTI-SOVIET ARTICLES AMONG OTHERS. WOODCOCK

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